



## The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle

<b>Date</b>	February 22, 2017	<b>Report No:</b>	CL-6-17
<b>Directed To:</b>	Mayor and Members of Council	<b>Attachments:</b>	Appendix A Municipal Complaints Policy
<b>Department:</b>	Council Services	<b>Policy References:</b>	
<b>Prepared By:</b>	A. Armstrong, Deputy Clerk		
<b>Subject:</b>	Bill 8, <i>Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act</i> - Municipal Complaints Policy		

### RECOMMENDATION:

That the report of the Deputy Clerk dated February 22, 2017 (CL-6-17) regarding Bill 8, the *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act* BE RECEIVED and that the Municipal Complaints Policy BE ADOPTED.

### REPORT:


Bill 8, the *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act* was passed and received Royal Assent on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The legislation expanded the jurisdiction of the Ontario Ombudsman to include municipalities, universities, school boards, and hospitals. Prior to its enactment, the Ombudsman's oversight was limited to provincial ministries, agencies, boards, corporations, commissioners and tribunals. The Ombudsman's jurisdiction over Ontario municipalities came into effect on January 1, 2016.

Bill 8 created broad provincial oversight over matters that were formerly strictly within the realm of municipal affairs. The Ombudsman has the authority to investigate complaints at the municipal level, only after local investigations have been completed. The Office of the Ombudsman encourages all municipalities to have a clear process for handling municipal complaints.



One of the opportunities identified in the Service Delivery Review was the implementation of a tracking system for inquiries and complaints. A centralized citizen contact system for registering complaints or compliments has been created. The Municipal Complaints Policy (attached as **Appendix A**) outlines the process when filing a complaint with the Town. This policy is intended to aid the Town in promptly and effectively addressing program and service delivery concerns raised by members of the public. The policy will assist the municipality in providing excellent service to the public and contribute to continuous improvement of its operations.

The municipal complaint system does not replace City Wide Works, the request for service system currently in use in the by-law enforcement and public works areas. Residents will continue to report issues regarding a specific service to the appropriate department (ie reporting a burnt out street light, snow removal, tree trimming, reporting a by-law infraction)

The complaint system is intended for use by residents and customers of the Town who are dissatisfied with services they received. Perhaps the resident has spoken to a staff member and is not satisfied with the course of action being proposed by the Town and wishes to elevate their concern. If he/she contacts the Ontario Ombudsman's office, the Town must be able to show the steps that were taken to address the concern. The Ombudsman's Office also requires that the mechanism for a resident to register a complaint be easily accessible and for this reason, the complaint form will be posted on the Town's website. From time to time the municipality receives compliments on services provided and for this reason, the form also accommodates those individuals or groups wishing to pass along their compliments. Complaints about a member of Council and allegations of violations of the Code of Conduct will continue to be handled by the Integrity Commissioner

  
Agatha Armstrong, Deputy Clerk

  
Brenda Andreatta, Director Council Services

Reviewed by:							
CAO 	Finance	Council Services 	Public Works	DSI	Culture & Rec	Fire	

**COUNCIL POLICY**

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Municipal Complaints	<b>Resolution:</b>	
<b>Date Approved:</b>		<b>Department Responsible:</b>	
<b>Revision(s) Date:</b>			

**PURPOSE:**

This policy is intended to enable the Town of LaSalle to promptly and effectively address program and service delivery concerns raised by members of the public. The policy will assist the municipality in providing excellent service to the public and contribute to continuous improvement of operations. The Town of LaSalle strives to increase customer satisfaction by:

- Providing a fair complaint procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint; and
- Providing a timely and accurate response to complaints; and
- Using complaints as an opportunity to improve program and service delivery issues.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

Section 270(1)5 of the *Municipal Act, 2001, as amended*, and the *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014* require a municipality to be accountable to the public for its actions. The policy supports the municipality's commitment to the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers of the Town of LaSalle

**POLICY:**Definition

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction related to a municipal program, service, facility, staff member or volunteer, where a citizen believes that the municipality has not provided a service experience to the customer's satisfaction at the point of service delivery and a response or resolution is expected. A general complaint may be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. Anonymous complaints will not be addressed except in





circumstances where the subject matter of the complaint creates a health and safety situation or other serious effect.

A complaint is different from:

- A request for service made on behalf of a citizen for a specific service, or to notify the municipality that a scheduled service was not provided on time. (Example of a Request for Service: reporting a burnt out street light, snow removal, trail system, reporting a by-law infraction)
- A general inquiry or specific request for information regarding a municipal service;
- An opinion or feedback, comment and expression of interest in a program or service process;
- A suggestion or idea submitted by a customer with the aim of improving services, programs or processes.

This policy does not apply to complaints regarding:

- A decision of Council or a decision of a committee of Council;
- Internal employee complaints;
- Matters addressed by legislation or an existing municipal by-law;
- Matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, quasi-judicial boards etc.

#### Informal Resolution:

The complainant is encouraged to attempt to resolve concerns by dealing with municipal employee(s) directly involved with the issue where appropriate.

All employees are responsible to resolve concerns by dealing with issues or concerns before they become complaints.

#### Process for Filing a Complaint

Where a mutually agreed upon resolution between the citizen and the employee cannot be achieved, complaints shall be submitted to the appropriate department, on the form attached as Schedule "A". All information must be completed.

All complaints received will be logged and forwarded to the appropriate department head or designate. The complainant will receive notification that the complaint has been received and is assigned a tracking number.

The employee assigned to investigate the complaint shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 business days.



### Decision

The employee assigned to investigate the complaint shall provide a response to the complainant within 10 business days of the department receiving the complaint to advise of the outcome, or provide an estimated timeline for the resolution of the complaint.

The response shall include:

- Reasons for the decision;
- Actions the municipality has taken or will take as a result of the complaint;
- If the department is unable to provide a response within (10) business days, they shall notify the complainant of the delay and provide an estimate of when a response will be provided.

### Record Keeping

The department shall file a copy of the complaint and resolution for record keeping purposes only.

### Appeal Process

There is no appeal process at the municipal level once the municipality has communicated the decision to the complainant.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

As outlined in the Policy.

### **REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

Section 270(1)5 of the *Municipal Act, 2001, as amended*  
*Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014*

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix "A" Complaint and Compliment Form

## Complaints and Compliments

**Use of this form**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction related to a municipal program, facility, service or staff member, where a citizen believes that the Municipality has not provided a service experience to the customer's satisfaction at the point of service delivery and a response or resolution is expected.

This form does not pertain to a decision or Council of a decision of a committee of Council, internal employee complaints, matters addressed by legislation or an existing municipal by-law, matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, quasi-judicial boards etc.

**Name \*****Email Address \*****Phone Number \***

XXX-XXX-XXXX

**Department \*****Subject \*****Description**

All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner according to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Information will be collected, used and disclosed in accordance with the Act.

SALE

RENNES